

SAFEGUARD THE WELFARE OF APPRENTICES

JUNE 7, 1937.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. CONNERY, from the Committee on Labor, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 7274]

The Committee on Labor, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 7274) to enable the Department of Labor to formulate and promote the furtherance of labor standards necessary to safeguard the welfare of apprentices and to cooperate with the States in the promotion of such standards, having had the same under consideration, report it back to the House and recommend that the bill do pass.

A bill (H. R. 6205) to enable the Department of Labor to formulate and promote the furtherance of labor standards necessary to safeguard the welfare of apprentices and to cooperate with the States in the promotion of such standards, was referred to a subcommittee, and hearings were held on April 22, 23, and 26, 1937. H. R. 7274 is an amended version of the original bill and conforms to the considered views of the subcommittee after consideration of H. R. 6205.

The report of the Honorable William J. Fitzgerald, chairman of the subcommittee, to the full committee on the bill (H. R. 6205) follows:

THE UNITED STATES APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

In considering this bill (H. R. 6205) it is essential that an understanding be had of the apprenticeship problem in the United States, the reasons for the problem, and the corrective measures undertaken to solve it. It is also essential that we have a clear understanding of what is meant by the term "apprentice." An apprentice is an employed youth who spends approximately 85 percent of his time learning a skilled trade through organized experience and teaching on the job. In addition to this training he receives nominal wages progressively increasing with his advancing skill. An apprenticeship system is an arrangement whereby all persons entering a skilled trade do so under conditions or standards which assure them full training in every process, division, and tool of the trade, supplemented by study in related subjects.

After listening to the witnesses who have appeared before the committee and after examining the documents and evidence submitted, we come to the conclusion that there has never been an adequate system for the training of apprentices in the United States. The United States Census reports for 1930 reveal information which is startling to those who recognize the implications. They

show that there were some 750,000 young men and women under 25 years of age employed in skilled trades who were not receiving organized training. They were, no doubt, picking up a little information as they worked, but practical men who have themselves learned trades and other practical men who employ skilled workers have informed us that skilled mechanics cannot be made by the "pick-up" method.

The economic progress of a great industrial nation such as ours is largely dependent on the skill and genius of its workmen. It is surprising, therefore, that definite national steps had not been taken long ago to assure an adequate supply of skilled workmen and at the same time provide young people much-needed employment in the trades.

The evidence presented to us shows that a few of the more forward-looking individual employers, employers' associations, and trade-unions have carried on excellent apprentice training programs, but these afforded opportunities to but a few of the thousands of young people who should benefit from such training. Those who have conducted sound apprenticeship programs are the foremost advocates of a nationally integrated apprenticeship system.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

Before 1934 there had been no national approach toward having labor standards of apprenticeship accepted. The Federal Committee on Apprentice Training has established a workable approach, has brought together national trade associations and labor organizations to formulate apprenticeship programs acceptable to both groups, has cooperated with State and local groups interested in apprenticeship, and has served in an advisory capacity to both employers and employees in setting up practical programs for training skilled workers. The bill (H. R. 6205) permits the continuance of the work which is now being done by the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training and which has proved of great value to industry, labor, and young people. The Federal Committee on Apprentice Training was appointed by the Secretary of Labor in June 1934 under authority granted by Executive Order No. 6750-C, to provide for genuine apprentice training under the National Recovery Administration codes and at the same time safeguard labor standards. So effective was the work of the Federal Committee under the National Recovery Administration that it was decided to continue it after the National Recovery Act was declared unconstitutional. Its administration was placed under the jurisdiction of the National Youth Administration. In September 1936 the President, in a letter to the Secretary of Labor, requested the transfer of the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training to the Department of Labor and directed that an appropriation to cover this activity be included in the Department's budget. Such action was approved by the National Youth Administration and by the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training. It was recognized that the work should be placed on a permanent basis.

Accordingly, the Department of Labor included an item for the work of the Federal Committee in its appropriation request for 1937-38 and the Budget Bureau recommended to the Congress an appropriation for this work during the coming fiscal year. However, the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives was of the opinion that it could not approve this item as a matter of policy and that the assignment of functions should have special consideration by Congress. In accordance with this decision, H. R. 6205 was introduced by Mr. Fitzgerald of Connecticut and referred to the Committee on Labor.

The committee is of the opinion that the development of an adequate apprenticeship system is not an emergency program. There is constant need for some Federal agency to bring employers and employees together in the formulation of national programs of apprenticeship and to attempt to adjust the supply of skilled workers to the demands of industry. This is a logical function of the United States Department of Labor.

The forces which give rise to the prediction of a shortage of skilled workers in some trades were not set in motion by the depression alone. Because of the inadequacy of American apprenticeship, a large part of the supply of skilled labor came from abroad. The setting up of immigration bars dried up this source of supply. The effect of the immigration laws on the supply of skilled labor, however, was discounted because of the fact that it was erroneously believed the automatic machine was rapidly making the all-around skilled workman unnecessary; and because it was expected that technical schools could provide all the training required for skilled work. Another cause was the failure to emphasize

the attractiveness to youth of work in the trades. The depression, it is true, has aggravated the situation by terminating such apprenticeship programs as were being conducted. During the last 5 years there has also been a natural shrinkage in the ranks of skilled workers. The records of the United States Employment Service show that a skilled labor shortage is evidenced when a trade reaches 75 to 80 percent of normal. So, with increasing business activity, this problem of shortage of craftsmen will become more acute.

The important bearing that the training of skilled workers has upon our social structure, especially with respect to relief, security, citizenship, crime, and national defense, was clearly indicated to the committee. Because of the nature of the problem, it is of vital importance that the Congress take cognizance of it and take action to strengthen the remedial measures which have been inaugurated by the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training.

Both employers and labor heartily approved the work which is being done by the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training and recommended that it be continued under the Department of Labor. The agency dealing with labor standards in apprenticeship must have the confidence of labor and of employers, for their whole-hearted support and cooperation must be secured before constructive action can be started. The employer supplies the job and the facilities for training. The workers have the skill and do the actual imparting of skills to the apprentices. There is a mutual interest between the employer and the workers in proper standards for apprenticeship. Distrust and suspicion often develop when either one or the other undertakes the training program alone. It was pointed out to the committee by employers and employees that industry and labor are being brought together by the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training in a most effective manner to work out and administer apprentice programs and that young people are being assisted thereby to secure training which fits them for profitable employment and responsible citizenship. The experience of this close cooperation between management and labor on questions of apprenticeship may be expected to influence beneficially other negotiations between management and labor, with consequent benefits to the whole Nation.

Both the employer and employee representatives before the committee expressed themselves to the effect that the appropriation which had been requested for this work was inadequate. There was unanimous agreement, however, that the bill should be passed. The National Youth Administration and the United States Office of Education also endorsed the measure.

No opposition was registered with the committee.

ANALYSIS OF THE BILL

Section 1 of the bill (H. R. 6205) specifically authorizes and directs the Secretary of Labor to formulate and promote labor standards in apprenticeship and to encourage the inclusion thereof in contracts of apprenticeship, to bring together employers and employees for the formulation of programs of apprenticeship, to cooperate with State agencies engaged in the promotion of apprenticeship standards, and to cooperate with the National Youth Administration and with the United States Office of Education. This insures the continuance of the present program of the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training and guards against any duplication of work.

The relationship between the Department of Labor and the United States Office of Education in the field of apprenticeship has been carefully worked out by the two Departments, based on the recognition that there are two distinct groups of responsibilities and functions in the promotion and subsequent operations of apprenticeship plans. One group deals with the apprentice as an employed worker and comes under the jurisdiction of the Department of Labor; the other deals with the apprentice as a student and comes under the jurisdiction of the Office of Education. The activities of the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training have centered on the apprentice as a worker. The effectiveness of such an apprenticeship program has been amply demonstrated in the last 3 years.

Section 2 authorizes the Secretary of Labor to publish information on labor standards of apprenticeship and to appoint advisory committees composed of representatives of employers, employees, educators, and officers of other executive departments, to serve without compensation. This provides for the participation in the program of all interested parties. Practical programs are worked out by utilizing the experience of industry and labor and education in this important field.

Section 3 provides that the National Youth Administration shall be relieved of responsibility of promoting labor standards in apprenticeship, that the papers

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and records of the National Youth Administration relating to such activities shall be transferred to the Department of Labor, and authorizes the Secretary to employ persons necessary for the administration of the act with regard to existing laws applicable to the appointment and compensation of employees of the United States.

Section 4 provides for an effective date.

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, May 18, 1937.

Hon. WILLIAM J. FITZGERALD,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. FITZGERALD: I have your letter of April 16 requesting a report on H. R. 6206, a bill to enable the Department of Labor to formulate and promote the furtherance of labor standards necessary to safeguard the welfare of apprentices and to cooperate with the States in the promotion of such standards.

There is no objection on the part of the Department of the Interior to H. R. 6206, the provisions of which are in accord with a joint memorandum on apprenticeship issued to the Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, under date of March 1, 1937, by the Secretary of Labor and the Assistant Commissioner for Vocational Education of the Office of Education, a copy of which is enclosed herewith.

To avoid any possible misunderstanding with regard to advisory committees appointed by the Secretary of Labor, it would appear to be desirable to insert the word "National" after the word "appoint" in line 10 of section 2.

The Bureau of the Budget advises that this report is not in conflict with the legislative and financial policies of the President.

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES WEST,
Acting Secretary of the Interior.

MARCH 1, 1937.

JOINT MEMORANDUM TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

From: The Department of Labor and the Office of Education.
In re: Apprenticeship.

There seems to be some question in the minds of the committee members as to which phases of apprentice training relate to labor standards and which relate to education. It is clearly and officially recognized by the President, the United States Office of Education, the United States Department of Labor, the National Youth Administration, the American Federation of Labor, various national associations of employers, and State governments that there are two distinct groups of responsibilities and functions in the promotion and subsequent operation of plans for apprentice training. One group deals with the apprentice as an employed worker—the conditions under which he works, his hours of work, his rates of pay, the length of his learning period, and the ratio of apprentices to journeymen so that overcrowding or shortage of skilled workers in the trades may be avoided in large part. The second group of responsibilities deals with the apprentice as a student—the related technical and supplemental instruction needed to make him a proficient worker and the supervision and coordination of this instruction with his job experience.

The United States Office of Education and educators generally have not conceived it to be a part of their function in providing educational training for apprentices to give consideration to problems which relate to labor standards. Mr. Frank Cushman, Chief of the Trade and Industrial Education Service of the United States Office of Education, has stated, "We think there are two groups of responsibilities (in apprenticeship). One group has to do with labor standards, wages, hours, quotas, length of apprenticeship period, etc. The other group has to do with education and training of apprentices." Mr. Thomas Quigley, professor of industrial education at the Georgia School of Technology, and vice president of the American Vocational Association, said recently, "Certainly the vocational schools and their staffs do not wish to entangle themselves in the wages, working hours, and labor disputes involved in apprenticeship agreements any more than they do in other issues extraneous to the schools' one great job of training and coordinating such training."

There also seems to be a question in the minds of the committee members as to whether the two distinct phases of apprenticeship can be most effectively furthered nationally by a single administrative agency or by the two Government agencies which have jurisdiction, experience, and facilities in the respective fields. It has been amply demonstrated that the responsibilities in connection with the apprentice as an employed worker can best be carried on by the State labor department which is charged with the general responsibility of improving working conditions and fostering the well-being of the workers, and that the responsibilities in connection with the apprentice as a student can best be performed by the State board for vocational education. These State agencies in turn look to the United States Department of Labor and to the United States Office of Education for leadership and research and for the determination of national standards in their respective fields.

Except in a few States there has been no adequate machinery developed to promote uniformity and give adequate protection to employment standards of apprenticeship. Partly because of lack of interest in apprenticeship on the part of employers and partly because of this lack of machinery, this vital system of training for the highly skilled trades has not kept pace either with the needs of industry or with the opportunities for employment in the skilled trades. The United States Employment Service, as a consequence, warns that unless apprentices are put on now, within a very short period of time there will be a real shortage of skilled workers in many of our most important industries. Labor has repeatedly expressed itself in opposition to any apprenticeship program that does not provide proper safeguards for labor standards. If young workers are to be apprenticed to prevent this impending shortage, the trade-unions must be assured that the boys' interests will be safeguarded, that labor standards will be upheld, and that the apprentice will not be put on at the expense of the older worker. The agencies that can gain the cooperation of the trade-union movement with employers in the development of the labor standard phases of apprenticeship are the labor departments—Federal and State.

With funds for apprenticeship promotion on a national basis, the Department of Labor will be carrying out the purpose for which it was created, "to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States, to improve their working conditions, and to advance their opportunities for profitable employment." It will in no way encroach upon the work now being done by the United States Office of Education, but, on the contrary, as evidenced by the activities of the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training during the past 2 years, will vitalize and greatly increase the demands upon the school authorities for preapprentice training, related instruction for apprentices, coordination of this instruction with job experience, the preparation of trade analyses and outlines of instruction, and for specially trained teachers to carry on these functions.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
FRANCIS PERKINS, *Secretary*.
UNITED STATES OFFICE OF EDUCATION,
J. C. WRIGHT,
Assistant Commissioner for Vocational Education.

